

**Summary of the
NELAC Federal Partners Teleconference
June 10, 1997**

The Federal Partners of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) convened by teleconference on June 10, 1997, at 11 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). The meeting was led by Ms. Jeanne Mourrain, NELAC Director. A list of action items is provided in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B.

INTRODUCTION

Ms. Mourrain introduced Mr. John Anderson, Chair of the Accrediting Authority committee asking if there were any particular portions of this chapter that he would like to note. Mr. Anderson pointed out Section 6.2.2 "Where To Apply For NELAC Accreditation" as being of particular interest to Federal Partners, especially part e which addresses the accreditation possibilities for government labs as they respond to the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP). For example, an organization could decide to develop their own Accrediting Authority capability or they would have the option to apply for NELAP accreditation through any other NELAP recognized accrediting authority.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Ms. Mourrain then directed the attention of the committee systematically through Chapter 6 asking for any questions or clarifications or discussion that might be desirable. In Section 6.2.1 (a), the concept of primary and secondary Accrediting Authority was discussed. It was noted that a primary accrediting authority is the accrediting authority that issues the initial NELAP accreditation and who is responsible to perform the on-site audit. However, the secondary accrediting authority is one who accepts the accreditation of a primary accrediting authority through reciprocity. Examples were discussed how this might in fact be implemented flexibly in the NELAP Program. Section 6.4.1 (b 2) standardized audit checklists was discussed. The role of such an instrument in improving consistency for on-site assessments would be important to have available prior to any on-site audits. Ms. Mourrain indicated that EPA is already considering the mechanism for developing that checklist in the very near future.

Discussion of the NELAP Program and the NELAP Assessment Team in Section 6.9.1 (f) included discussion of whether the assessment team should consist of any non-governmental employees. It was the consensus of the discussion that the assessment team should consist of only governmental employees and that perhaps the last sentence in this section should be stricken.

Mr. Anderson suggested that the definitions in Section 6.11 probably should be moved into the common document definitions.

Discussion then continued on Figure 1, the flow chart on NELAP recognition for of an accrediting authority and the various underlying assumptions and implications of this process. Mr. Anderson noted that on-site assessments are scheduled for every four years while reapplication for Accrediting Authority status occurs every two years. This assumes that the

assessment between on-site assessments would be a paper review of the Accrediting Authorities' continued compliance with the NELAP standards.

The subject of cost for the on-site assessment was raised and it was noted that very likely the EPA team members would be supported under normal EPA funding and that the accrediting authority be expected to pay the travel expenses for other team members. Under this scenario it is anticipated that the actual cost of an on-site assessment could be minimized.

NEXT TELECONFERENCE

Ms. Mourrain thanked the committee members for their comments and inputs into the development of this chapter of standards. Mr. Anderson asked that committee members phone him with any further comments or suggestions as soon as possible. No further teleconferences are scheduled for this group prior to the Third NELAC Annual Meeting, July 28-31, 1997 at the Wyndham Anatole Hotel in Dallas, Texas.

ACTION ITEMS
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June 10, 1997

Item No.	ACTION	Date Completed
1.	Committee members are to phone Mr. Anderson with any further comments or suggestions as soon as possible.	

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
NELAC Federal Partners Teleconference
June 10, 1997

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